"Beloved, if God so loved us, *we ought also to love one another.*

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"*If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.*" I John IV: 7-12.

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

"*Keep yourselves in the love of God,* looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Jude 20, 21.

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently*:

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." I Peter I: 22, 23.[2]

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[2] See also I Peter II: 17; III: 8; and IV: 8.

"*Let love be without dissimulation.* Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

"*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love;* in honour preferring one another;" Romans XII: 9, 10.

"And the Lord make you to *increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men,* even as we do toward you." I Thessalonians III: 12.[3]

"But I say unto you which hear, *Love your enemies,* do good to them which hate you,

"Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." Luke VI: 27, 28.[4]

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity,[5] I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

"Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

"Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

"Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

"For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

"But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." I Corinthians XIII: 1-13.

Commentary

An indispensable element in love of God is love of all that is good. For ethics as an empirical science this is the chief significance of the first great commandment. This love implies devotion to the good,

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[3] See also I Thess. IV: 9, 10; Col. III: 12-14; I Cor. XVI: 14; Heb. XIII: 1; James II: 8.

[4] See also Matt. V: 43-47.

[5] It should be noted that the word *charity* as here used means *love* and is often so translated.

and this, in turn, an enlightened attitude toward it. All of this is necessary to give proper direction to the second great commandment—love of neighbor. What could love of neighbor mean in case of people who are without moral ideals or who place no value upon the moral life?

The facts seem to be that many people's love of God, or of the moral life, is quite overshadowed by a disposition to satisfy their own personal desires—appetites, passions, vanity, or craving for power over others. While the two great commandments are here, for convenience, merged into one—the command to love—and while there is a disposition in ethics to restrict discussion to love of fellow men, the great moral significance of the first commandment cannot properly be omitted, whatever one's attitude may be toward theology or religion. The idea of human or social welfare is meaningless if thought of out of relation to moral ideals to be attained. Realization of moral ideals in individual and social life is the very essence of human welfare. Pursuit of this end in ethics corresponds to seeking first the kingdom of heaven in the religion of Jesus, who promised that all necessary worldly comforts should be added. Modern ethics also recognizes the need of these other things as a means of developing personality. Love of neighbor or of fellow men is manifest in devotion to the cause of human welfare, as that term is here used.

This thought is discussed by the German philosopher, Kant, under the term *good will*, of which Kant says:

"Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world or even out of it, which may be called good without qualification, except a good will. * * * It is good in itself." Good will, he explains, is volition determined by duty; a will determined by law. That the worth of a man depends upon his *will*, not on his *knowledge*, is one of Kant's cardinal doctrines. This rationalistic doctrine seems somewhat cold and formal in comparison with New Testament doctrine. The contrast, however, is more in the form of expression than in contemplated practical outcome in the moral life. In the teaching of Jesus, for instance, the duty toward fellow men is expressed in the golden rule. Kant's way of expressing himself on this subject is much more ponderous, yet very similar in meaning. He says: "So act that thou canst will as a rational creature that thy maxim (principle of action) become a universal law of conduct."

John Stuart Mill, in his Utilitarianism, brings his ethical theory in more direct relationship with the New Testament, thus:

The utilitarian standard is "not the agent's own greatest happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether.

"As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and impartial spectator. In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility, To do as one would be done by, and to love one's neighbor as one's self, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality."

One of the last public utterances of the late Dr. Charles W. Eliot is directly to the point:

"If I had the opportunity to say a final word to all the young people of America, it would be this: Don't think too much about yourselves. Try to cultivate the habit of thinking of others; this will reward you. Nourish your minds by good reading, constant reading. Discover what your life work is, work in which you can be happiest. Be unafraid in all things when you know you are in the right.

"America must cling to ideals and promote them. Selfishness is no less fatal to national than to individual fulfillment.

"The minute you begin to think of yourself only you are in a bad way. You cannot develop because you are choking the source of development, which is spiritual expansion through thought for others.

"And so with the nation. If we remain in purse-proud isolation we may be secure, but that security will be purchased at the cost of our souls. America must take the responsibility vested in her nature and be a partner, not a patron, of all the world.

"Selfishness always brings its own revenge. It cannot be escaped.

"Be unselfish. That is the first and final commandment for those who would be useful, and happy in their usefulness.[6]

PROBLEMS

1. How is the New Testament idea of God related to ethics?

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[6] Collier's, The National Weekly, May 29, 1926.

2. What are the ethical implications of the love of God with respect to (a) Love of truth and right living; (b) Our attitude toward fellowmen?

3. Why is good will toward all mankind essential in ethical theory and practice?

4. Why is each of the two great commandments essential to completion of the other?

5. How does the term "charity" as used in 1 Cor. XIII differ in meaning from the popular usage of that term?

CHAPTER XIV

THE EVIDENCE OF LOVE

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John III: 16, 17.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments." John XIV: 15.

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." I John V: 3.

"And we have known and believed the love that God hath for us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

"We love him, because he first loved us.

"*If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar;* for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

"And this commandment have we from him, *That he who loveth God love his brother also.*" I John IV: 16-21.

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

"My little children, *let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*" I John III: 14-18.

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

"*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*" John XV: 9-13.

Love, in the New Testament, is also manifest in unity of purpose and harmony of action. In Jesus' prayer for his disciples prior to his arrest in Gethsemane he said:

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and *hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: *for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

"O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: *that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.*" John XVII: 20-26.

"Bless them that persecute you: bless, and curse not.

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." Romans XII: 14, 15.

"Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

"For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

"*Love worketh no ill to his neighbor*: *therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*" Romans XIII: 8-10.

"For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but *by love serve one another.*

"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Galatians V: 13, 14.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Galatians VI: 2.[1]

"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

"Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." James V: 19, 20.[2]

Commentary

In the everyday experiences of life the evidences of love may be observed in the attitude of parents toward their children. The old proverb, "He that spareth the rod hateth the child," has been taken to heart by many stern fathers, who have shown their love for their sons by liberal use of the birch. The purpose of this procedure, when deliberate, is to make a good man out of a delinquent boy. If it is a mistaken method it may be due to want of enlightenment rather than to want of love. The trend of family discipline today is toward the reverse practice; the same love is manifest in over indulgence. What factor is common to these opposite practices other than the mere feeling of love? Do not all normal parents religiously desire the ultimate good of their children? Is that not part of the attitude of love common to parents who indulge in very different disciplinary practices? No enlightened parent of good character would consider the practice of any discipline that is not for the child's own ultimate good.

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[1] See also I Timothy I: 5; V: 1, 2; and II Thess. I: 3.
[2] See also James II: 8, 9; and IV: 11, 12.

Is not then love of one person toward another properly shown in doing what will be for that other's best good—his highest and most lasting good? Stating the same principle negatively, love of another person forbids using that person as a means, instead of as an end in himself. This principle is well stated by the philosopher Kant: "Treat every person as an end in himself, never as a means."

It is, of course, self-evident that slavery is in violation of this principle, and therefore of the command to love fellow men. Slavery is, however, only an extreme form of the use of fellow men as means to the comfort or pleasure of some one else. One of the most manifest examples in current practice is prostitution, including white slavery. This, in many cases, becomes just as much enslavement as was the type of slavery abolished by war. It is, in any case, more degrading and destructive of personality. This then, is also in direct opposition to the second great commandment.

In less striking form the practice of using fellow men as means is found in many modern industries. Industrial managers that regard labor as a commodity, and treat laborers as such, to the end of making the largest profits in business, irrespective of the effect upon the personalities involved in the business, are the legitimate successors of the slave owners of former generations. As a protection to business men who would practice love of neighbor in business much recent legislation has been enacted restraining unscrupulous competitors, the heathens of the business world. These heathens proclaim loudly against any attempt of government to regulate business practices, apparently unconscious of the fact that their own unscrupulous methods are the primary reason for such legislation. When love of fellow men becomes both universal and enlightened, if that time ever comes, such legislation will be unnecessary, as will also all legislation against crime.

The evidences of love and good will toward fellow men, then, are manifest in the treatment of every person as an end in himself and in providing conditions most favorable for each to develop his own personality to the highest possible degree. This is what the normal parent desires for his child. This desire on the part of the parent, accompanied by appropriate, enlightened attitudes and actions, is also a crowning feature in the development of the personality of the parent.

These same principles, when applied to society at large, will make of the human race an ideal family.

PROBLEMS

1. "Perfect love casteth out fear." Explain and illustrate.
2. Compare the fruits of love and hate.
3. Enumerate the evidences of parental love that have come under your observation.
4. (a) Give historical examples of love or good will toward all mankind.
   (b) Why do you regard these examples as evidences of good will?
5. From your own experience, give examples of neighborly love.

CHAPTER XV

ON TRESPASS, RECONCILIATION AND FORGIVENESS

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Matthew XVIII: 15-17.

"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

"Jesus sayeth unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." Matthew XVIII: 21, 22.

"Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

"And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." Luke XVII: 3, 4.

"Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

"And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

"The servant therefore fell down, and worshiped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

"Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

"But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

"And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

"And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

"So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

"Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

"Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?

"And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

"So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Matthew XVIII: 23-35.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Matthew VI: 12.

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

"But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matthew VI: 14, 15.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

"But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

"Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

"Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

"Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Matthew V: 21-26.[1]

"And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

"They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

"Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

"This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

"So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

"And again he stopped down, and wrote on the ground.

"And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

"When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, *Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.*" John VIII: 3-11.

"And when they were come to the place, which is called

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[1] See also Matthew V: 7.

Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke XXIII: 33, 34.

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The seventh chapter of The Acts of the Apostles records at length a sermon of Stephen, one of the Seven, then follows the story of his martyrdom:

"When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

"Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

"And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

"And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

"And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* And when he had said this, he fell asleep." The Acts VII: 54-60.

* * *

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians VI: 1, 2.

* * *

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, *forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*" Ephesians IV: 31, 32.

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

"Forbearing one another, and *forgiving one another,* if any man have a quarrel against any: *even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*

"And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." Colossians III: 12-14.

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

"Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

"And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

"Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." I Timothy I: 12-17.[2]

"*Confess your faults one to another,* and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James V: 16.

Commentary

The New Testament emphasis upon forgiveness is not to be interpreted as condoning sin; on the contrary, to "love righteousness and hate iniquity" is highly commended. The sinner, however, is not to be regarded as identical with the sin. Sin is to be eradicated; the sinner, saved.

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[2] See also II Thess. III: 14, 15.

Since ethics as a science deals with types of conduct and the reasons for approving or disapproving any type of conduct as such, it is not concerned with passing judgment upon individuals; although for them it points the way to right conduct and good character.

Forgiveness involves the spirit of love and good will towards fellow men and a desire to redeem them from their evil ways. The act of forgiveness is, however, no less a kindness to self than it is to the one forgiven; cherishing ill-will and a revengful spirit toward another is harmful to self and also tends to create ill-will in the one who is the object of the revengeful spirit. Forgiveness is a constructive force in the development of character; ill-will, revenge, hardness of heart, are destructive.

The principles of individual character development may likewise be applied to communities and to social organizations such as churches, fraternal bodies, states, and political parties. Here the spirit of kindness, tolerance, and helpfulness characteristic of the forgiving spirit is also a constructive force, while the opposite spirit is socially destructive.

Of the various environmental influences upon character by far the most important is the influence of persons; that is, the social environment as a factor in character formation far outweighs all other factors.

What personal characteristics count for most as influences for good? It will be generally conceded that those human characteristics manifest in the spirit of forgiveness are at least among the most powerful. The spirit is, however, not to be confused with the "molly-coddle" attitude; otherwise, rebuking the evil doer would not have been suggested. An evil doer who is already fully conscious of his immorality and ready to turn away from it needs no rebuke. It happens, however, in many cases that either or both of these conditions may be wanting. The rebuke is designed to be a factor in supplying this moral deficiency. To hold an individual responsible for his acts is a very important factor in developing his character, but especially so when associated with the spirit of helpfulness.

Another aspect of the problem of forgiveness is its application, if it has any, to self; that is, the attitude an individual should take toward his own moral weakness as compared with his attitude toward others in like circumstances. May be forgive himself as freely as he forgives others? This seems to be a case where moderation may well be practiced. While nothing is to be gained by merely pining over moral lapses, neither is anything gained by freely excusing or forgiving one's self for them. Experience shows that the individual can develop his own character best by holding himself to strict accountability, but this without losing courage and energy in vain regrets for events that are beyond the possibility of change. This is not essentially different from his attitude toward others. The individual can, however, apply to himself the principle of accountability much more effectively than he can toward others. This is due in part to the fact that the moral character of the individual is in some measure determined by his motives, which are very likely to be misunderstood by the casual observer.

Attention is again called to the fact that ethics deals with types of conduct and is not concerned directly with passing judgment upon individuals. In ethics, too, one may love the right and hate the wrong without hating individuals.

As to the method of settling disputes between individuals, it will be noted that the method suggested by Jesus is also now frequently applied to relations between states and nations; i. e., first by diplomacy, and, if this fails, by arbitration, or in place of this, by an International Court of Justice. The principle involved is now generally recognized as one of great merit, both for individuals and for communities.

PROBLEMS

1. Explain and illustrate the procedure recommended by Jesus in case of one person's trespassing against another.
2. Compare the moral benefits of forgiving (a) to the one forgiven; and (b) to the one who forgives.
3. Should all trespassers be forgiven irrespective of their attitudes and other conditions?
4. Does forgiveness enter in any degree into procedures in the criminal courts? If so, in what way?
5. Is the spirit of forgiveness most manifest in the early or in the later stages of the moral development of the race? Explain and illustrate.

CHAPTER XVI

GRATITUDE OR THANKFULNESS

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; *and be ye thankful.*

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Colossians III: 15-17.

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

"*Giving thanks always for all things* unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;" Ephesians V: 18-20.

"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;" II Thessalonians I: 3.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

"Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, *abounding therein with thanksgiving.*" Colossians II: 6, 7.

Commentary

Gratitude is a much neglected virtue. In the New Testament it usually appears under the name of thankfulness, and most often has reference to one's attitude toward God. Within the realm of strictly human everyday relationships, however, there is ample need of developing the attitude of gratitude and of giving it appropriate expression. This expression may be only one of simple appreciation. Such appreciation is often the means of inspiring the person to whom it is tendered to further good work and finally to a very high type of service. On the other hand, failure to recognize the good or to manifest gratitude for worthy service may be the cause of discouragement and finally of failure.

Gratitude as a factor in the moral life has, however, also a much wider significance. Gratitude toward humanity, expressed in willing and enthusiastic service, is fundamental in ethics and religion. The thoughtful, educated person of today cannot but realize his great debt to his contemporaries and to the multitudes that have gone before. It has already been indicated that without them he could not be a civilized man at all, to say nothing of his being without all modern conveniences. Until a person realizes these simple facts and develops a deep sense of gratitude toward his fellows, he can not have a sense of moral obligation and a disposition to serve his fellows that is commensurate with the demands of ethics.

Gratitude is, then, not to be regarded as an attitude merely, apart from conduct. Any moral attitude, to be really moral, must find appropriate outward expression. While, in case of gratitude, this expression may properly be in words, it should not end there, but should bear fruit in some sort of return service.

PROBLEMS

1. Why is gratitude a very important quality of character?

2. In what ways may gratitude toward God be expressed?

3. (a) Why should each person have an attitude of gratefulness toward his fellowmen?

(b) In what ways may this gratefulness be expressed?

CHAPTER XVII

STABILITY—STEADFASTNESS OF PURPOSE

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say?

"Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:

"He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great." Luke VI: 46-49.[1]

"And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:

"Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." The Acts XX: 22-24.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." I Corinthians XV: 58.

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." I Corinthians XVI: 13.

"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil: *cleave to that which is good.*

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[1] See also Matthew VII: 13, 14, 21-29.